based power station, the tariff rate is going to be three rupees. According to my information, gas-based power generation is the costliest. If it is going to be three rupees, then I would like to be informed by the hon. Minister. If the information is not readily available with him, he can please find it out from them and let me know how far this information is correct.

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: Sir, I don't have the exact rates for the Enron unit.

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN: Please supply it to me.

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: I will definitely supply it, but I think it is necessary to inform the House that insofar as gas-based stations, go, minus fuel charge, they are cheaper. But, it depends whether gas is going to come down in price or go up in price. At the moment, internationally, the rate of gas has dropped sharply because Korea, Japan and many countries have cancelled LNG contracts. So, one doesn't really know where we are going. But, with regard to the PPA that Enron has signed, and what would be the normal rate, I shall communicate it to the hon. Member. I am not too certain whether three is really correct or not. Without verification, I won't like to say anything.

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN: Very fine.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): Mr. Virumbi, do you have any point which has not been answered by the Minister? Please be brief.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Sir, he has not answered my point. There is a 525 megawatts Spic project. Everything has been cleared, but still it is pending with the Central Government. The Central Government may look into the matter and see that it is cleared as early as possible.

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: What is the name of the spic project?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): The question is:

That the Bill further to amend the Indian Electricity Act, 1910 and the Electricity (Supply) Act, 1948, as passed by Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration.

The motion was adopted.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): We shall now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

Clause 2 to 13 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: Sir, I move:

That the Bill be passed

The motion was adopted.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): Now we have a statement by the hon. Health Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*... One minute. Mr. Minister. Your statement is being distributed to the hon. Members.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Strike by Group 'C' & 'D' Employees of Hospitals in Delhi

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): Sir, the House may recall that on 23rd July, 1998, I had informed the House that Group C & D employees of hospitals/dispensaries of the Central government, Government of NCT of Delhi, Municipal Corporation of Delhi, New Delhi Municipal Council, Employees State Insurance Corporation, & All India Institute of Medical Sciences had proceeded on an indifinite strike with effect from 20.7.1998 to press for the acceptance of their demands. Their major demands included:

(i) Three Time Bound Promotions to all the Health Employees;

(ii) Better Pay-scales to be given to all Group C & D Employees;

(iii) Night Weightage Allowance, Risk & Hazard Allowance, Washing Allowance to be paid to them;

(iv) Patient Care Allowance prevailing in various hospitals/institutions be given at par to all Deprived Health Employees and PCA should be 25% of the basic pay;

(v) All anomalies/disparities arising out of recommendations of 4th and 5th Pay commissions be removed and unformity in recruitment rules be brought out; and

(vi) Implementation of the agreement signed on 23.9.1997, between Joint Action Committee on Hospital Karamchari Union and the Director General of Health Service.

To resolve the situation created by the strike, meetings with representatives of the Joint Council formed by the Unions of striking employees, were held on 30th June, 7th July, 14th July and 22nd July, 1998 by the Director General of Health Services. Negotiations with the employes were conducted by Secretary Health on 26th, 27th and 28th July, 1998. I also held meetings with them on 19th July, 26th & 28th of July, 1998.

Simultaneously, the Government on 2.7.1998 set up a Group of Ministers to examine these demands. The Group of Ministers consists of:

(i) Shri Yashwant Sinha, Minister of Finance.

(ii) Shri Dalit Ezhilmalai, Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare.

(iii) Shri K.R. Janarthanan, Minister of State in the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions and Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance (Banking, Revenues, and Insurance).

The situation was constantly monitored by the Group of Ministers and all the demands of the employees were examined in detail.

I am now glad to inform the house that the strike has now been called off with effect from today. The Government has agreed to increase the Hospital Patient Care Allowance from Rs. 75 per month in the case of Group D employees to Rs. 695 per month and from Rs. 80 per month in the case of Group C employees to Rs. 700 per month. The Patient Care allowance has been increased from Rs. 70 per month to Rs. 690 per month for all Group C & D employees of Central Govt. Health Service Dispensaries. It has also been decided to extend the Patient Care allowance to those employees who are involved in Patient Care in National Malaria Eradication Programme, National Instt. of Communicable Diseases, RAK College of Nursing, Lady Reading Health School and Rural Health Training Centre, Najafgarh. Similarly the Washing allowance being paid at the rate of Rs. 60 per month to uncommon category of Group C & D employees in Central Govt. Hospitals/Dispensaries will be extended to the employees of the five institutes referred to above. A broad based committee will be set up to look into the Hospital and Allied technical groups/categories of employees under Directorate general of Health Services in order to rationalise the staffing pattern and improve career prospects of Group C & D employees working there.

I am glad to inform the House once again that the strike has been called off and all employees have resumed duties.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

On the points arising out of Answer to Starred Question No. 449 given on 17th July, 1998 regarding property owned by Indian Women

PROF. (SHRIMATI) BHARATI RAY (West Bengal): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I wish to raise a discussion on some points arising out of the answer given to Starred Question No. 449 on 17th July, 1998. Sir, very few women and for that matter very few men